

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 152339

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, CM

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS COUNTRY EVALUATION PLANS

REF: YAOUNDE 2720

1. BECAUSE DRAFT HUMAN RIGHTS COUNTRY EVALUATION PLANS MUST STILL BE REVIEWED BY DEPUTY SECRETARY, D/HA AND OTHER ELEMENTS AND BECAUSE THESE MAY LATER BE INCORPORATED, AT LEAST IN PART, INTO PARM, YOU CANNOT AT THIS TIME DISCUSS EVALUATION PLAN WITH CAMEROONIAN OFFICIALS. WHILE IT IS NOT INTENDED THAT TEXTS OF CURRENT CDP'S BECOME PUBLIC, FACT THAT SUCH PLANS EXIST MAY WELL BECOME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE. YOU MAY, THEREFORE, AS APPROPRIATE WISH TO VERBALLY INFORM CAMEROONIAN OFFICIALS THAT WE ARE CONTINUING TO REVIEW HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN ALL COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR WELL-KNOWN CONCERNS IN THIS AREA.

2. RE YOUR QUESTION ON FREEDOM HOUSE: FREEDOM HOUSE'S LATEST ANNUAL COMPARATIVE SURVEY OF FREEDOM (JANUARY - CONFIDENTIAL

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FEBRUARY 1977) RANKS CAMEROON AS "NOT FREE". IN COMPARATIVE FREEDOM HOUSE RANKING OF NATIONS BY POLITICAL RIGHTS ON A SCALE OF ONE (MOST FREE) TO SEVEN (LEAST FREE), CAMEROON IS RANKED SEVEN, ALONG WITH BENIN, GHANA, SOMALIA, THE USSR, CUBA AND MANY OTHERS. IN TERMS OF CIVIL RIGHTS,

FREEDOM HOUSE RANKS CAMEROON IN CATEGORY FIVE ON THE ONE

TO SEVEN SCALE IN COMPANY WITH EGYPT, INDONESIA, KENYA, ZAMBIA, SOUTH KOREA, ETC.

3. TO ACHIEVE HIGH FREEDOM HOUSE RANKING FOR POLITICAL RIGHTS A COUNTRY MUST HAVE FULLY OPERATIVE ELECTORAL PROCEDURE, GENERALLY INCLUDING A MULTI-PARTY POLITICAL SYSTEM. COUNTRIES WHERE POLITICAL COMPETITION IS RESTRICTED TO IN-FIGHTING WITHIN PARTY HIERARCHIES ARE GENERALLY RANKED "LEAST FREE" BY FREEDOM HOUSE. IN TERMS OF CIVIL RIGHTS, FREEDOM HOUSE CONSIDERS FOUR CRITICAL RIGHTS: FREEDOM FROM POLITICAL CENSORSHIP, OPEN PUBLIC DISCUSSION, THE RULE OF LAW, AND FREEDOM FROM GOVERNMENT TERROR (E.G. ARBITRARY ARREST).

4. AF IS POUCHING INFORMATION ON FREEDOM HOUSE (FOUNDED 1941) AND MOST RECENT COMPARATIVE SURVEY OF FREEDOM REFERRED TO ABOVE. VANCE

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